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THE

WINNOWING.

Charles L. Wheeler.

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THE

WINNOWING:

BEING

Sundry Small Poems

BY

CHARLES L. WHELER.

BOSTON:
BEAN & WHELER.
1851.

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The Poet to hys Boke.

GOE forthe, my lyttle Boke,
And make thee Frendes or Foes:
Ther bee that can not loke
Wyth pleasure on the Rose.

But seke thou for no praise
By sondrye ways of Arte:
That Tree hath lengthe of daise
That hath a sturdie harte.

Gif thou doeth bring a teare
To anye Maydens eye,
Give others kynglye geare;
The ritcher One am I.

The Farther deemes hys Chylde
Mo fayr than others be:
Tis pardoned, Such thincke not wilde
The Poets equal Vanitie.

Thou mightest with me remaine
And thus eschue all ill,
But since I am not faine,
Let Good Men take good will.

Without reverberation into space,
No Flower hath changed its primal hue, or lost
A petaled leaf — no Bird but sings as first
It sung, and flutters in its pristine sheen.
The tiny seed that hath a subtle soul
Whereof we little know, produces still
Its kind, as in thy fair, edenic morn:
Its kind, nor yet its likeness; for where'er
We turn, no tree hath its exactest twin,
Nor blade of grass, nor fruit, its patterned mate.
The flower that charmed and fruits that nourished them,
The Primal Pair, still bloom and bourgeon, still
Refresh, but tell not to the curious eye
Of Eden's site; for then, as even now,
Thy beauties stretched beyond the farthest bound
That man's far-reaching race hath ever known.

And what is man to thee? The years that tell
His generation, tear not a charm from thy
Resplendent face! The race of hero-kings,
That fills the earth with hollow shouts and loud
Reverberation, pass away — and all
Their immortality lasts not so long
As lasts thy humblest flower! And they, the vile,
Degenerate souls, that bow to the old curse,

And pander to their lusts, until the mind,
Debauched, cries out for more e'en when the flesh
Proclaims its satisfaction — oh! how far
Debased beneath the humblest thing of life
They are! Oh, rather would I die as dies
The blue-eyed Violet of early spring
Than live the long-drawn life of shame they live!

O Nature! ev'n in early youth my fleeting hours,
Else spent in play, were dedicate to thee!
The shaded brook, whose waters wanton chased
The shy sunbeams that through the foliage stole,
As blithe they jumped from rock to rock, beheld
Me as a worshipper ere scarce I knew
The why I sought thy templed fane. Far down
The brook there was a mossy rock that sang
In sweeter tones than olden Memnon sung
At touch of Morning's bright and genial beams.[10]
There have I daylong sat, in raptest trance,
And heard the Aquian Harp, and watched the whirl
And trip of waters in their play. I loved
To walk the long-deserted forest path,
Wherein the flowers and grass exultant grew;
To wander up and down the babbling brook;
To scale the lofty hills; to note the flowers
That throve in conscious pride where'er the rain

And sunshine wooed them — these were joys that won
Me from the sports of youth. And now, escaped
The noisy town, I feel more deep than erst
The sweet, outbreathing influences of all
Thy happy scenes. The soft winds touch my brow
Like wings of guardian spirits; th' flowers wild
Distil a balm upon my soul that lulls
The fevered pain; the song of birds brings back
The blissful memories of sinless days;
And all things ministrations exercise,
Peculiar and divine, to beatify
My quick-consenting heart.

In thee, Nature!
I own a Teacher, silent and serene!
The Rose, down drooping with a cankered heart,
The Violet, by storms prostrated low
Within its natal morn, touchingly tell
The vanity of human love and hope.
How silently the Lily mocks the Crown!
How eloquent the mountains hoar exhort
To humbleness! And he that walks thy paths
With open eye and spirit rightly tuned,
Shall meet evangels sweet in every thing!
The varied year shall teach in varied tongue:

The Spring shall brighten Hope's effulgent wing,
And make the heart grow young again! The grass
Up creeping from the freed, exulting brook,
The flowers putting forth their petaled leaves
In tender trust, shall come to him like voices
From graves of those we love — telling that He
Whose care sustained them in their winter-tomb,
Shall lead our souls through Death's all-going gate
To brighter worlds of endless morn! The Fall
Of th' year is full of sights admonishing
Of man's mortality; and Winter, swathed
In whitest robes, whereon the sunbeams touch
And linger half afraid, teaches austere
Of man's last going forth.

From out thy womb,
Oh Nature! spring the glories of the fleet
And changeful year! And thou that gave them birth
Art sepulchre as well. From depths profound
Of yonder wood, as from a chancelled aisle,
A voice comes forth that stills the whisp'ring leaves,
And sadly thrills through all my inmost soul:
"Go forth, oh worshipper! and count the sands
Along yon ocean side; or hence to farthest bounds,
And number every forest leaf, nor deem
It vain or profitless employ; for each

Is epitaph and monnment of men
Whose life perchance was long as thine, and whose
Ambition was stronger!"
The clamb'ring vine
Conceals the blasted oak and ruined wall —
The tufted grass, with flowers filigraned
Between, doth charm our eyes till we forget
The cold, damp grave beneath. And it is well.
Oh Nature! keep our lives in sweet accord
To thee! and when our ripened time shall come,
The soul shall feel no pall upon its trust.
I am content what time befalls. Plant trees
Above my grave, and let their roots engird
My frame around; let flowers also bloom
Thereon. So would I rest. A tree shall be
My monument — a flower, my epitaph,
Outlasting Theban pomp! ** ** ** **

"WHEN SUNSET'S GLORIES."

When Sunset's glories fade away
Along Dorado's golden shore,
In one green vale his beams delay
And pensive o'er the landscape pour.
So o'er the twilight Realm of Dreams
The hallowed light of Eros pours,
And oft thy trysting presence seems
To meet me on those blissful shores.

The Bee, benighted on the mead,
And sleeping in the Lily's bed,
And rocked by Zephyrs as they speed
To wanton with the Roses red,
Is not so purely lodged and kept
As are my secret thoughts of thee!—
When thou wert gone have I not wept?
What Flower e'er wept the 'parting Bee?

The Daisies young, at shut of day,
Defiant close their crimson gates;
And thus thy spirit wards away
Each look that base importunates.

But once I looked into thine eyes,
Nor felt them turned away:
In them I read, as in the skies,
The dawn of Love's unending day.

The Stars remind me of thine eyes,
The Lilies of thy stately mien;
And something wakes a glad surprise —
A thought of thee — in every scene!
—My heart is yearning for thy love
With faith that nothing may divide!
Oh! shall my heart's unwearied dove
Return for aye unsatisfied?

The treasures of the dirty mine
I cannot, would not, offer thee;
A White Rose were the better sign
To speak the full heart's homage free!
Methinks thou deemest one true heart
As wealth and worth enough for thee;
If so, believe me void of art,
For none have ever loved like me!

South-Carolina—1850.

LAKE WINNEPISSIOGEE.*

Sweet Smile of the Spirit! in beauty outstretching
As far as the eye in its rapture can soar!
How gladsome thy waters still sparkle in sunlight,
And dance with a song on the pebble-strewn shore!

How beauteous the islets that smile on thy bosom
Like gems on the breast of an amorous queen!
And Rainbows that bend from the brow of Monadnoc
Scarce equal the hues of their flowery sheen!

The sentinel mountains that tower above thee,
And stand, like the gods, with their heads in the sky,
Still shield thy fair bosom from boreal Tempests,
That howl in their anger while hurrying by.

Not wildly exalted the praise of thy beauty,
Bestowed, in thy name, by the Indian tongue;
For where, in the climes by the godlike made classic,
Have poets a brighter and fairer e'er sung?

* The word Winnepissiogee is, I believe, from the language of the Ossapees, a tribe now extinct. The word signifies the "Smile of the Great Spirit," and is a beautiful exemplification of native poetical expression.

How oft have I lain on thy green sloping margin
And mused on the legend that tells of thy birth —
The beautiful tale of the Indian poet,
Brought down from the days of the primitive earth.

When God had completed, (so ran the tradition,)
This Eden-like[1] land for the red hunter's home,
He sate on his throne of radiance celestial,
And drank in the whole as 't were oped in a tome.

He smiled with a joyance so great and exctatic,
The tears of his gladness fell down from his face,
And ever thereafter, among the blue mountains,
The Indian hunter God's presence could trace.

New-Hampshire—1851.

SONG OF THE YANKEE FARMER.

I.

Our boast is not of castled homes
Upon our thousand hills;
Our boast is not of noble blood
That through our veins distils:
No — 'tis our pride that we were born
In Freedom's chainless clime,
And if escutcheon we would bear,
The Plough were choice sublime!

We're tillers of our Yankee land,
We're stalwart men and true,
Who toil with ready heart and hand
Where'er there's work to do.

II.

We reck not that our clime 's without
The charm of classic fame;
Enough for us that Freedom here
Re-lit her altar flame.
To us this has a sweeter charm
Than clusters round the graves,
Where Roman chiefs unhonored lie
Beneath their children's slaves.

We're tillers of our Yankee land,
And sons of freeborn men,
Who hurled Oppression from its strand,
To ne'er return again!

III.

Our homes are on ten thousand hills,
And yet our hearts are one —
Our voice is heard at Washington,
Our will is ever done.
We love our Home, and ne'er will seek
For brighter streams afar,
Than those which sing our eyes to sleep
Beneath our evening star.

We're tillers of our Yankee land,
And delve with hearty pride
To make it fairer than the strand
Of Arno's classic tide.

Boston—1836.

TIME, FAITH AND ENERGY.

I TURNED and read historic pages,
Filled with deeds of mighty men,
Whose towering minds controled their ages
With the Sword and with the Pen;
And then I mused and questioned thoughtful
How their hero-names were won,
And how the teeming tomes were fraughtful
With their deeds so nobly done:
But while I sat and deeply pondered
Over Act and Destiny,
Unsummoned by the thought I squandered,
Home the answer came to me:—
"To every soul of genius towering
GOD has given helpers three—
The names of these, the victory showering,
Are **Time, Faith and Energy.**"

—TIME! that aye with equal measure,
Bears us on its ceaseless flow,
Still lengthens out our hour of pleasure,
Deadens every sharper woe!
And he that sows, with godlike reason,
Nebula of after deed,

Shall find the harvest, in its season,
Equal to his hope and need.

—Faith! in God is life eternal,
Faith in man's a tower of strength,
And whoso hath this gift supernal,
Shall obtain his hope at length.
'Tis Faith that whispers to the spirit
God is just and man is true—
That tells the soul it shall inherit
Things the faithless never knew.

—Energy! th' godlike soul and tireless
Pent within our mortal clay,
Ignites the Act that flickered fireless,
Lights to-morrow in to-day!
It is the power that wins the glory
Hallowing the Poet's name;
It is the power that gives to story
Bright and fair the Hero's fame.

O man! that still with brave endeavor
Toilest up Life's beaten way,
Despair not—falter not—no, never
Howe'er darkly glooms the day!
Still on! though Penury and Sorrow
Every onward step pursue,

And still from great examples borrow
Strength to bravely dare and do!
And whatsoe'er thy great ambition,
Poet-wreath or hero-crown,
Press onward in thy chosen mission,
Waving all 'gainst Fortune's frown!
Yes, on! and by these three supernal,
By Time, Faith and Energy,
The gifts of Earth that are eternal
Shall at last be showered on thee!

Georgia—1849.

THE APOLOGY.

The Bee that trifles with the Flower,
Hath songs that well deceive it,
But when its virgin sweets are gone,
Ne'er feels a shame to grieve it,

But, kissing you, I am no Bee,
And well you may believe it,
For every time I touch your cheek
'Tis fairer as I leave it!

A MORNING SONG.

Arouse ! the King of Day is making his way
Through the golden gates of Morn ;
And list! gay Chanticleer, both far-off and near,
Proclaims the night forlorn.
Arouse !
And mount the fleet and graceful steed,
And o'er the hills away,
Away !
Till the dappled light upon the mead
Dissolves in open day.

Arouse ! the blithe Redbreast has left its snug nest
And sings amid the flowers ;
Whilst the Honey-bee, upon the flowery lea,
Improves the morning hours.
Arouse !
And mount the fleet and graceful steed,
And o'er the hills away,
Away !
Till the dappled light upon the mead
Dissolves in open day.

Cherokee Country—1850.

A MEMORY.

Long ago, beneath the arches
Of our tall, patrician trees,
Sat I in the evening twilight,
Fannéd by the gentle breeze:
Meg was sitting close beside me,
And her hand was laid in mine,
While our hearts' united beating
Acted Love's sweet pantomime.

Forth the starry hosts were marching,
In their bright and blazing helms,
But I heeded not their splendor,—
All my stars were 'neath the elms!
Oh, not with glasses telescopic
Needed I to sweep the skies;
Heaven itself to me descended,
And its stars were woman's eyes!

There we sat, and talked, and trifled,
While the hours stole noiseless by;
Vows we made, and truth we plighted,
That seemed too pure to ever die.

Thus oft we met, and oft we parted,
Trimming still Love's guiltless lamp;
Venus' coming oft was looked for,
But heedless passed Mars' fiery tramp.

Sweetest flowers, born of beauty,
Perish ere the rude winds blow;
So the flower I loved and cherished
Passed from out Life's vale of woe.
—Tremblingly the leaves are falling
From the tall, patrician elms,
While alone I sit recalling
Thoughts of ONE in yonder realms.

Georgia—1848.

THE RUINED MIND.

Oh God! of all the bitter agony
That flesh, keen-wrung by Torture's knife, may feel;
Of all the wounds that dread Remorse inflicts
On souls he drives upon Despair's abyss;
Of fangs that gnaw the heart of slighted Love,
Or chills that desolate Affection's hearth,
What throe can equal that which rends the soul
Of him that wakes to know the fearful truth
That Reason totters on his regal throne —
Who feels the spirit of his mighty Thought
Departing with a mournful, lingering wing
As loath to leave the shrine whereon was laid
A glorious work for Genius' cunning hands
To do! O Christ! that I have known this day!

No Fancy-Elves have sported with my thought,
And conjured up a dream of seeming truth:
It is Conviction's well-weighed proof — more plain
Than once I saw and felt Consumption's flush
Upon the cheek of *her*, for whom awhile
My heart made moan within its darkened cell
Till Spring, that flattered ope the Rose, did send

Her Angel into my soul, (like sunshine
Into the sick man's window sent,) to soothe
My grief.
I could have blessed the fate that made
The madman's portion mine. But oh! to live
And *feel* the MIND decaying day by day —
Slower than the Flower dies, yet as sure,
And blacker than the Night without its Stars —
This, oh my God! is fate to which the sleep
Of Death were balm — to which the fate of him
Who bore the stenching corpse bound unto himself.
Were mild as maternal chast'ning to the child
Beloved. The living trunk — the dying mind!

They say the lustre from my eye is gone:
They say 'tis like the murkey skies wherein
No stars arise — where fitful gleams only break,
As lightnings flash afar at sea when ships
Go down. Am I mad? O God, would I were!

The blind old bard of England's stormy day,—
Within whose too-ambitious, sun-turned eyes
The venging gods had shot malignant light;
Whose soul thus pent in rayless night, did burst
Its thrall, and flash sunward its gorgeous wing,
An walk on Heaven's crystal walls, and write

That grand Apocalypse that Christian men
Admire,—did love to dream in God's sunshine,
And speculate on Freedom's coming reign
Of peace. The sounding chambers of his soul
Were but the lighter when external light
Was gone. The steady fires of Genius made
A world of hallowed visions there; as fair
As that to which Arabia's daring sons
Descended in their ardent thirst for lore.[12]
Nay, MILTON could not all unhappy be;
For when Morning came, and he did sit
Before his cottage door, (his daughters there
On either side, intent with ready pen
To catch his least inspiréd word,) could hear
The Birds carol, the Insects hum, and even
Could almost hear the very Grass growing 'neath
His feet — so fine the ear compelled perforce
To *see* as well as hear. Though he himself
Was old, and blind, and hated by his kind,
His heart grew young in hope, his undimmed soul
Renewed its olden fires, and he forgave
His bitter foes, as there he sat and felt
God's great work of benificence to man
Still going on round, as't still shall go
Through countless ages yet to dawn and set.
Nay, MILTON could not all unhappy be.

The starry GALILEO, in his midnight cell,
Compassed around by bigot foes, yet felt
The pleasures of creative mind! And as
He threw his hopeful thought into the far,
Resplendent Age yet to be, godlike rose
Above his bitter doom, and cried aloud —
"*E pur si muove!*" Ay, he could suffer chains
To bind his limbs, and triumph still; for well
He knew that God's great laws immutable
Would speak for him in coming times.[12]

And they
Who freely gave Life, Liberty and all,
A willing sacrifice for God's most holy cause,
Had still a glorious recompense of Life
Eternal. MARIUS amid the ruins
Of Carthage; SPENCER eating the bitter bread
Of Poverty in haunts hence classic made;
FOSCARI in exile dying homesick:
Old LEAR, deserted e'en by filial love:
Ay, each and all whose tears e'er wept their great
Calamity, had some sweet recompense
That made their doom less bitter seem.

Thank God
O ye! whose woes can find relief in tears —
In Heaven's promise — or, (what is half as sweet,)
In hope of earthly fame. But woe like mine

Is tearless. Ashes of the Hopes that once
Illumined Reason's march, are swept within
The fountain of my tears, and they are quenched.

At times the dead, cold blank that wraps my brain,
As though a Vampyre grasped it in his hand,
Departs; and Memory, with her mystic key,
Unlocks the treasured stores of sinless days —
Restores with ever faithful hue and look,
Each face and scene the heart holds dear.
'T is then my childhood's early Home I trace,
And con its every charm with miser eye.

A lowly cot within a valley nestled down,
And flowers grew around its door, and bees
Unceasing kept their toil-beguiling hum,
While birds did plunge in ambient air, as mad
With some great ecstacy of song. From out
The base of yon orbed hill a brooklet flowed
Adown the vale, a modicum of whose
Translucent waters trilled and sparkled o'er
A mimic wheel. A tiny mill it was,
Whose wooden saw could only cleave the air!
The orchard old, whose every tree was known
By its familiar name; the meadow green,
Whereon, when Evening's shadows came, we feared

To look, lest Will-o'-the-Wisp should thither lead
Us unaware ; the wood-girt pond wherein
The sweetest water-lilies grew — all, all
Divinely glow in Memory's magic glass.
Far down the vale a white-spired church arose,
And when the Sabbath's stillness came, and all
The fragrant hay was lying in the fields
Untouched, how beautifully the church-bell said
Its message sweet from God. And, ceasing toil,
In comely garb the people thither thronged
To hear how Christ had died for them, and how
The heavenly hosts made joy when sinners turned
To God in their repentant hearts ; and they,
The little children, hand in hand, were there,
To hear of Him who loved them all so well.

But ah ! too soon the cherished scenes decay.
The while Oblivion's twilight shadows rise,
And wrap my brain in dullness and in gloom.
Yet through its hollow cells, as through the night,
Anon some shrouded Thought will steal along,
As spectres haunt the ruined wall and keep.

From blasted oaks the mistletoe will spring :
The arrow spent may serve some nobler aim ;
But what, oh God ! can charm his soul to earth

Who feels his brain forsaken of the Dreams
And Forms that whilom made their dwelling there?
Hath Hope a lure to win his steps from Death,
Where all is peace and equal state? Alas!
Of what avail were Earth's best boon to him
Of MIND bereft? A child's poor plaything were
As well!

Oh Hygia! thou giver of health,
Of laughing eye, and rosy lip and cheek,
Hast thou no Balsam for the Dying Mind?
Oh, give me rich elixir — stay the touch
That mildews — blasts — corrodes — benumbs my brain! —
Oh, stay the blight, or give me deepest draughts
Of mandragordia's oblivious wine!

* * * * * *

Oh God! thou sure, unfailing refuge here
For him who sickens on Life's sharded way;
Thou friend to him whom every friend forsakes,
Thou balm for woes that nothing here can cure;
To THEE I turn in agony of soul
And prayer unutterable. My heart is whelmed
In voiceless pain, and cannot ask its wish.
Thy will be done! I cannot lay my hand
Upon the soul's poor cage and say — *Depart*,

Thou fluttering Bird! But oh, my God! how
sweet
Were death to me, whose soul unceasing moans
Above the wreck of Mind — the barque of Life,
And all its rich argosy freight, bestrewed
In stenching, tarnished splendor! Yet, oh God!
Thy will be done! * * * *

South-Carolina—1850.

MIRIAM.

THE subject of the following poem was an orphaned English lady who came to Georgia to support herself by teaching. Her spirit was imbued with a melancholy profound and irradicable; yet it was impossible not to be pleased with her gentle manners and sweet voice. She found warm friends and protectors, but they little availed. The cold, red clay of Georgia rests upon as gentle a bosom as ever made loveable and noble our human nature.

How long shall I remember
The orphan MIRIAM,
The loveliest Flower that ever
Adorned the classic Cam!

If I could wish my moments
Of lengthened course to be,
I would but say, Flow only
With her sweet memory!

She had not Beauty's moulding,
Its studied mien and airs;
But *something* in her aspect
Enchained me unawares.

Her eyes were as pure fountains
That quench the pilgrim's thirst,
Yet leave the spirit's longing
More deep than 't was at first.

Her curls, like constant sunset,
Fell o'er her pallid cheek,
Where Sorrow sat ennobled —
A beauty none may speak.

Her voice was richest music —
Her 'heart-strings were a lute'—
And whoso heard its accents
Was charméd, still and mute.

The atmosphere around her
Seemed hallowéd alway,
As though sweet spirits o'er her
Had made it brighter day.

I ofttimes had this fancy,
(Sithence a creed mature,)
That visitants supernal
Await upon the pure.

And breathe into the spirit
A poppy redolence,
That wraps in softest visions
The merely clayey sense;

Till the tendrils of affection
Are loosened, one by one,

And the spirit rises buoyant
To realms beyond the sun.

Else wherefore die the flowers
Ere Autumn's frost ensues?
Else wherefore dies the maiden
That every Grace endues?

There is a flower that opens
In th' murkiness of night,
But shuts again its portals
Before the dawn of light.

So oped the life of MIRIAM
In Sorrow's chilly hour —
A bud too early blasted
To ever ope a flower.

The Cypress tree is drooping
Where MIRIAM 's asleep, —
There let the fairest flowers
Their purest tears beweep!

Her only tomb my heart is,
That sometimes melts in tears
In fear this dear memorial
Will perish with my years.

Georgia—1842.

THE BUTTERFLIES.

From the French.

Ye Butterflies! with snowy wings,
Careering o'er the swelling sea,
Can'st say, sweet voyagers, when shall I
On wings as snowy follow ye?

Know ye, my wantons of the air,
Know ye my black-eyed *Bayadere?*
If ye could lend your wings of light,
My spirit would not linger here!

I'd leave to you the Roses sweet
And on my airy pinions fly —
Ma Bayadere! sweet Flower of Love,
Upon thy bosom let me die!

THE COMING ON OF WINTER.

The Indian Summer's gone — the far-off woods
Have lost their dark green look;
Their falling leaves bestrew the forest walks,
Or whirl away on the eddying brook.

And Summer's birds less oft are heard to sing,
The sweeter ones are gone away;
I oft'nest hear the lone Woodpecker's taps,
Or shrilly the pipe of the Jay.

The hoar frost glitters o'er the gathered fields
When Morning comes with lazy beams;
And spangled filigranes of crystal spars
Meet midway on the pebbly streams.

But blither still they sing for all the cold,
As did the little barefoot boy
That yestermorn ran quickly past my door,
Carolling with a feignéd joy.

The clouds' deep shadows lie upon the fields,
The sunlight falling faint between;
But oh! how darker the shadowy memories rise
As I survey the changing scene!

There is a melancholy joy that suits
The pensive dreaminess of mind,
To wander off into the pathless woods
And hear the wailing of the wind.

I've wandered all day long through yonder woods,
Nor nothing profited nor done;
As on the brook the leaves went whirling by,
My thoughts to naught but revery run.

Betimes the Stripped Squirrel stared at me,
Or dropped his nuts upon my head; —
If others were like me, 't were naught of men
The forest tenents e'er could dread!

The night comes on — there's snow in yonder clouds;
Good night to Autumn fields, good night; —
To-morrow's dawn shall see the Earth arrayed
In purest robes of spangled light!

New-Hampshire—1851.

HONOR TO FREE LABOR.

Forget awhile the hero-names
That blaze in ancient story:
The humbler hero of to-day
May claim his mead of glory.
The Plough, the Anvil and the Loom
Shall have historic pages,
And he that *makes* shall well deserve
The praise of future ages.

Who makes a blade of grass to grow
Where all before was arid,
Is greater than the victor king
With kingdoms tributaried.
The Plough runs smoothly o'er their graves
Who toiled in War's endeavor;
The harvest waves where once they fought,
And there shall wave forever!

Who swings aloft the pondrous sledge,
Some useful thing to fashion,
Is nobler than the Lily-hand,
The slave of lust and passion.

Whatever springs from Labor's hand
Is free from shame and sorrow;
Its columned shaft shall catch the light
That soonest dawns to-morrow!

The Loom!—to CARTWRIGHT be renown
Far greater than my ditty:
His praise is spoken in the hum
Of every Factory city!
Nor less to him whose genius planned
The fast-revolving spindle!—
While cotton grows on Southern plains
Their fame shall never dwindle!

To MORSE, who tamed th' electric flash,
And made it Thought's evangel,
To tireless speed from clime to clime
Like Truth's far-flashing angel;
To WATT, above his steam-engine
Of well-adjusted motion;
To FULTON, on his flaming barque
Careering o'er the ocean;

To SHŒFFER midst his printing types,
DAGUERRE with sunbeams painting;
CASSINI, throwing up his streams
To cheer the sick and fainting;

To each and all whose genius teems
With things of worth and beauty,
Be freely poured the Muses' praise—
A pleasure and a duty.

To make—it is to rule a world
Of Genius' own creation;
To toil—it is to beautify
For Time's perpetuation.
When mind and hand in concert work,
Earth's secrets ope before them;
Triumphal arches, hugest domes,
Instanter tower o'er them!

No more the sons of Fame shall throng
Where foemen bid defiance;
A brighter prize shall lead them through
The paths of Art and Science!
Grow green, ye fields! and wave, ye woods!
In God's own sunlight beaming;
No more amid your happy vales
Are War's red banners gleaming!

Georgia—1847.

THE SMILE.

The heavens were glowing 'neath Morning's first beam,
As brightly he came thro' the portals of Day,
When swiftly adown the Light's silvery stream,
A Smile, like an angel, was holding its way.

It came to the earth — and a cottage of clay
Was blest with the love that fell bright from its wing;
It stole to the lip of a child at its play,
And wreathed o'er its face with the sunniest spring.

The mother delightedly hung o'er her child,
And brother and sister came fondly around,
And echoed his calling, right merry and wild,
Till trembled the air with the jubilant sound!

That Smile, as a glance, passed from face unto face,
And cheered every heart with a blessing benign;
Nor Sorrows nor Cares but departed apace,
While dawning they saw but that heavenly sign.

Oh! sweet is the day, and delightful the earth,
When Smiles in the morning bless children and friends,
For Anger and Friendship join hands at the hearth,
And peace to each heart like a spirit descends!

Georgia—1848.

OLDEN MEMORIES.

I.

When the poppy-wreathéd Night
Fills my soul with dreamy sleep,
Mute around my aching heart
Olden Memories softly creep;
And as tearful mourners watch
Still a-near the lovely dead,
There they watch with pallid Hopes
Whose inspiring souls have fled.

II.

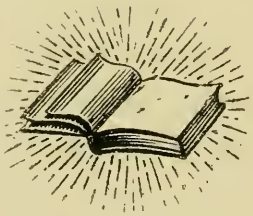
Sleep may pour her opiate
Like a balm, into my soul,
But the ghosts of perished Dreams
Haunt its cells without control.
Back they come in sheeny robes,
And, with voice as sweet as yore,
Whisper o'er my heart's light chords:
Nevermore! O nevermore!

III.

When the rosy-blushing Morn
Sly into my window peeps,

And dispels the gentle drug
That my soul in slumber steeps,
Far away the watchers fly,
Waving wings that loathly soar,
While they weep and sadly sigh :
Nevermore ! O nevermore !

Georgia—1848.



THE HUMAN SOUL.

THE human soul! O, idly still
The searching thought we squander:
Beyond Life's dim and twilight bound
No living foot may wander!

The Dead are gone into that realm
No living eye may enter;
But thence they cannot come to me
To act my spirit's Mentor!

Oh! vain it were to tire the eye
Perusing Plato's pages,
And vainer still to break the gloom
That hovers o'er the Ages.

The worm hath reveled o'er their hearts —
The solid tombs have crumbled;
The demi-gods of Fame are dust,
And all their might is humbled!

They cannot speak! From out the gloom
There comes no truthful token —
Unto our doubting, wavering thought
No spirit-word is spoken!

The world of Beauty smiles around,
The world of God within us;
Yet all that eye or thought can know
Will not to Faith e'er win us.

We doubt — we delve — we ponder still,
And What? and Where? we question:
We fear to take the human heart's
Or ev'n a flower's suggestion!

Be still, proud Reason! on thy throne,
Thou art not self-created;
Thy sway hath bounds thou canst not pass,
Thy reign is arbitrated!

The Lark encaged will ceaseless pine
To soar to fields of azure;
And *something* in us finds not here
Its all-sufficing measure!

Oh! check the proud, presumptious swell
Of Reason's vain demurring,
And in thy weakness turn to FAITH,
Of instinct more unerring!

Georgia—1849

MY HEART'S QUEEN.

One heaven for thee and me.—D. H. Jacques.

I.

Not the thing of Fashion's artist
Is the maiden I adore;
Not the toy of wealth unbounded
Sways my heart forevermore!
Beauty's charm and virtue's treasure
Better are than fortune's sheen;
'T was for these my heart first chose her
Aye to be its gentle queen!

When you meet her, pass her by—
Seek some maid in Fortune's train;
Turn away your venal eye
From the cheek of Fanny Vane.

II.

In your ramble have you seen her—
Seen my own heart's peerless queen—
While she gathered morning flowers,
Tripping o'er the dewy green!

Blushed she not e'en like the young rose
'Neath your rude and earnest gaze?
Fell her eyes not on the greensward
When your look bespoke your praise?

When again you meet my heart's queen
Bend upon admiring knee,
Nor with look's too earnest gaze
Press upon her purity!

LOVE'S DAINTY ROMANCE.

PART FIRST.

It was a moonlit night in June,
And all the perfumed air
Was laden with a plaintive tune
Of musical despair.

A Mocking-Bird was plaining low
In sorrow for his mate:
His heart dissolved in tones of woe
As he bewailed his fate.

Alas! I said, 'tis little joy
That Love can make us here;
His purest treasure's but alloy,
A having and a tear!

And oft is Love's auroral morn
Beclouded ere its noon,
By hearts that in a haughty scorn
Reject its purest boon.

And then I mused upon the stars,
How they no fading knew;

And then upon the orient bars,
Befrecked with Morning's hue.

The sun, the clouds, the starry train,
The rainbow's arch of tears,
Immortal beauty still retain
Through all the lapse of years.

But Love departs — his idol grows
Like Memnon's — voiceles, cold —
And they that made the plighted vows
Forget the thoughts of old.

The Mock-Bird's song of sorrow deep
Was latest in my ears,
And then it wailed into my sleep
Upon a sea of tears.

I closed my eyes to Venus' light,
And all my tender thought
Was of the dreaminess of Night
To overflowing fraught.

There was an eye looked in my soul,
A soft blue eye and meek;
And once methought that there did roll
A tear upon my cheek.

The angel of my dream, methought,
Then met me in a kiss —
A touch that instantaneous wrought
A wild, ecstatic bliss.

How long in that sweet sleep I lay
No count of mine made known —
My spirit met the coming day
With sunrise of its own.

But list! what voice is it that grieves
In tones so soft and sweet?
A voice so sweet that e'en the leaves
Its murmurings repeat.

Song.

'Tis well with the Flower
That lives but a day —
The tears of the Twilight
Beweep its decay.
'Tis well with the Hours
That quickly are flown —
They hallow in memory
The joys we have known.

'Tis well with the Cloudlet
That fades from our sight —
All pure in its being,
It fades into light.

'Tis well with the Planet
  Hurled down from its throne —
Such glorious fading
  No mortal hath known.

'Tis well with each creature
  Of earth and of air —
They sport an existence
  Unburdened by care.
But woe for the maiden
  Whose love-laden heart
Must silently treasure
  The pang and the smart,—

Who poureth her spirit
  As lavish as rain —
Who loves, but whose love is
  Returned not again!
Though Modesty's vestals
  Keep ward ever nigh,
Her secret's betrayed by
  A glance or a sigh.

The heart of the maiden
  Hath many a tone,
But sighs for the music
  Of one not its own.
But oh! if her glances
  Awaken no love,
Forgive her the sinning
  Of angels above!

As sweet as words that bashful tell
The love of many years,
As strange as tho'ts that sudden swell
At beauty's half-hid tears;

So soft that voice upon the air
Its soulful cadence trilled,
So sweetly strange the tumults were
That through my bosom thrilled.

I looked around in sweet amaze
To see from whence the sound,
But naught rewarded my poor gaze
Save *footsteps* on the ground!

Now, Dian of the Silver Bow,
You need not doff your shoe;
So fair a one as this, I trow,
Was never worn by you!

And look! the very grass upsprings
Beneath its envied tread —
So light, the wearer sure had wings
And so has quickly fled!

My footsteps fondly lingered still
Upon that magic ground,

Like one enchanted late, whose will
Would fain again be bound.

PART SECOND.

So indestructable the light
That memories prolong,
We are the happier for a sight,
And for a simple song.

That morn I was in happy mood,
And yet I scarce knew why —
Where'er I walked nor field nor wood
Had aught to win my eye.

One question clamber'd in my thought
Where'er I roved along —
How can be seen, how can be caught
My morning bird of song?

When sunset's gold-dust showers rain
From out the bannered west,
The arbor's rustic seat again
Shall be my nightly rest.

And I will seem to woo the Moon
As cold she moves along,

The whiles I watch to catch eftsoon
My morning bird of song.

Two livelong nights my vigils burned
Into the opening day,
Before to me my bird returned
To sing her morning lay.

The third! oh sweet auspicious morn,
Devoid of all annoy!
The very trees, with newborn flowers,
Were tremulous with joy!

As 'tween a thought and dream I lay,
I felt the foliage stirred,
And with a gentle, quick assay
I caught my timid bird.

In maiden shame her blushing cheek
Was nestled close to mine;
And when her blue eyes dared to speak
They said "Forever thine!"

And so I won my ALLIE ROSE,
So timid yet so bold;
And love between us constant grows—
Let common loves grow cold!

NOTES.

10. The rock here spoken of lies in the middle of the brook; and the water which flows under it, through some unseen contrivance, causes a kind of liquid sound resembling the notes of the Piano-Forte. I early called it, in consequence, the Aquian Harp.

11. Some learned philosopher—I forget who—has argued to great length in favor of the idea that America was the original seat of Paradise.

12 The Arabian romancers tell of an enchanted library, full of fairy wonders and mystic lore, hid deep in the bosom of a high mountain, the wonderful entrance of which opened but once in a year, and into which whoever dared to enter was forced therefore to remain a twelvemonth. When the portal again opened he was ready again to go forth "so armed in forbidden lore as to be able to soar above the heads of the multitude, and to control the powers of nature."

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